GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
TOURISM AND CULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4302
ANSWERED ON:21.04.2003
DECIPHERING OF MANUSCRIPTS
DALPAT SINGH PARASTE

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether due to lack of able scholars in ancient languages who could decipher thousands of manuscripts available in these languages, several mysteries related to culture remain unexplored;

(b) if so, the efforts made by the Government in this regard;

(c) whether the Government propose to seek assistance from certain institutes or neighbouring countries in the matter;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the materials used for writing such manuscripts?

Answer

MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN)

(a) & (b) : Considering the magnitude of manuscripts collection in the country, a National Mission for Manuscripts has been launched to locate, enumerate, preserve these manuscripts in India and abroad with a view to enhancing their access and conserving them for posterity. As part of this, the Mission also aims to train scholars to learn the scripts, decipher them and undertake research.

(c) & (d) : The activities of the Mission are to be carried out in consultation and co-operation from all stakeholders including custodial institutions, State Governments, non-governmental organizations etc.

(e) : The manuscripts available in India are reported to be written on diverse kinds of material like birch bark, palm tree, cloth, paper etc.